THE UNDERGRADUATE.

"DE OMNIBUS REBUS, ET QUIBUSDAM ALIIS."

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Origin of the Homeric Poems.

Remarks on the 1st Art. 2d Vol. of the American Quarterly Review.—No. 1.

THE influence of custom and association upon the mind is peculiarly strong, and, without doubt, often an effectual barrier against a candid and ingenuous discussion of the principles and views it entertains. The custom of associating Homer, for instance, with those splendid poems which bear his name; and the deep interest, increased by every perusal of his works, taken in the destiny of a man who possessed in so admirable a degree, the richest gifts of the Muses, would almost make one condemn, unheard, the writer who should deny the authenticity of his works, and attempt to cover his name with oblivion. A feeling amounting almost to reverence and veneration for those of the ancients, who distinguished themselves by their superior powers of mind, and have handed down some of the most beautiful models of eloquence and poetry, is spontaneous in the bosom of every modern, and would almost lead them to pronounce the hand sacrilegious that would touch the wreath of their well-earned fame. Under the influence of feelings like these, which will readily be admitted to be very common in society, it will be no source of wonder if those do betray a little prejudice in their writings, who advocate the claims of this noble Poet.

But there is a still more dangerous, and, to some extent, opposite principle at work among the leading literary men of the age,—one which is more hostile to candid and open discussion, and far more injurious to the progress of truth—it is the excessive desire for *novelty*; the systematic rejection of every principle or position, historical or literary, which bears the marks of *age*; the gaping credulity with which every hypothesis is received, provided that it is *new*. This disposition which is so marked a characteristic of the age, and appears to be the *desideratum* with a great portion of our writers, cannot have escaped the notice of any who are familiar with the popular works of the day, and especially those works which drink in the spirit of the literature of Germany. It is to this country, though justly celebrated for the classical acquirements and extensive researches of its many learned men, that we owe some of the wildest theories that ever startled, or rather defied the belief of the candid. Many of their speculations upon the Scriptures, of which some are substantially valuable to biblical literature, and all indicative of great learning, are an illustration of the singular genius and skeptical character of the learned in that country. An attempt was made by Gesenius, a learned professor in one of the institutions of this place, to disprove the supposed antiquity of the Pentateuch,* and show that it was not the writings of Moses, but the production of a later age,—his speculations were, however, triumphantly refuted by the gigantic labors of Professor Jahn. The undertaking of Wolf, in his *Prolegomena*, of which the article at the head of this piece is a review, is of a character perfectly analagous to the one just mentioned, and the first made *expressly* for the purpose of disproving the prevailing opinion, that the authorship of the Iliad and Odyssey rightly belongs to Homer.

It is by no means, however, the first attempt to explode the antiquated opinion that Homer composed the Iliad and Odyssey in the *precise form* in which they now exist, or that they have undergone no consideraable alteration since their composition; for these opinions and others not denying that their authorship is Homer's, have been with a great deal of plausibility maintained by many writers upon this subject.—Doubts have been expressed by Josephus,† in relation to the opinion that these poems were the work of a single man, from which the Reviewer finds it easy to suppose that the same sentiments were held by the Alexandrian school and derived from thence by this historian. But it is a singular circumstance, if the same views were entertained at that place, that they never found their way to the world under the sanction of the school, and that Josephus did not avail himself of its authority to establish his bold speculations upon this subject. Perrault, in his parallel between the ancients and the moderns, suggested the idea that the siege of Troy was a common subject for the songs among the bards and rhapsodists, and that a collection and arrangement of these might constitute the works which are now attributed to Homer. This opinion was controverted by Fabricius. They are supposed by Bently, in his reply to Collins on free-thinking, to have been separate songs composed by a rhapsodist of the name of Homer,

* North American Review, No. li. Art. 2. Antiquity of the Pentateuch.

† Josephus Against Apion. 1. Section 2.

to be sung at festivals, and finally collected and disposed into separate epics by Pisistratus, who flourished about 537 years before Christ. A still different opinion is advocated by Wood in his essay on the original genius of Homer,—he maintains with much plausibility that they were not originally committed to writing, but that this has been done at a period subsequent to the time of Homer.

Such are some of the opinions prevalent among literary men at the time when Wolf entered the field, and published his *Prolegomena* at Halle, in Saxony, in which he pushes his incredulity a step further, and denies that such a man as Homer ever existed!—The article in the American Quarterly prefixed to the head of this paper, and to which we have before alluded, adopts the views of Wolf and amplifies upon them in a strain of extravagance which completely throws this theorist in the shade; and could we believe it, would not only tempt us to doubt the existence of Homer, but that of his nation itself. That there is much which can never be known in relation to Homer and his works, is obvious from the nature of the case; but we see no reason why the darkness which of necessity covers the *primordium* of his nation should be rendered so intense as to blot out the occasional bright beams of truth that shine upon the traditionary page. And yet, the direct tendency of the article before us is to destroy the validity of *all* historical accounts of this interesting people, anterior to 600 before Christ; for the simple purpose, it would seem, of ingrafting the theory that Homer never existed except in the imaginary tales of bards and rhapsodists. The points of enquiry in regard to this subject we give in the language of the Review, with a slight abbreviation.

"1. Did such a poet as Homer ever exist?

"2. If a poet of that name ever lived, were his Iliad and Odyssey composed originally in separate and unconnected rhapsodies, as historical songs for the purpose of recitation at feasts and festivals? If so, it follows that Homer was one of the *Aoidoi* or *Rapsodoi*; a class of men like the Prophets, Bards, Scalds and Druids.

"3. Were the Iliad and Odyssey composed by Homer, or only collected and arranged by him, as epic poems, each treating of one given subject, and forming a whole as we now have them; or were they originally composed in metrical narratives, *rapsodiai*, afterwards collected promiscuously, and finally arranged in the order in which they now appear?

"4. Was the siege of Troy a common subject among the rhapsodists of Greece and Asia Minor, particularly Ionia? so that the poems now attributed to Homer, a rhapsodist of eminent celebrity, might have been, in part, composed by the itinerant poets and songsters as well as himself?

"5. Did the poems in whole, or in part, exist as written works, or only in memory, till the Pisistratidæ collected and arranged them, as the poems of Ossian till the collection of Macpherson?

"6. Was the art of writing known in the time of Homer?"

We have not made these quotations for the purpose of entering into a discussion of the points here proposed, for we have no disposition to be inquisitive about the *circumstances* of a man, until the point be determined, *whether he ever had an existence!* If it can be made to appear that a man by the name of Homer, to whom the poems bearing that name owe their origin, has lived in some age of the world, it then will be interesting and proper to push our enquiries a little more into particulars concerning him; but for the present we wish to make upon this extract but a single remark,—that it was evidently placed at the head of the article under review, to show the reader how many plausible suppositions there may be in regard to the poet and his works; and, since he cannot know the particulars in the history of the former, to prepare him to disbelieve the authenticity of the latter. For the purpose of more effectually securing this point, the mendacity of the Greeks, especially the ancient Greeks, is insisted upon, and certain positions assumed, by which to test their historical writings,—many of which are correct, but from some of the following we shall take the liberty to entirely dissent.

"There is no evidence, but traditionary, of any fact whatever of profane history, anterior to 600 years before Christ. We are strongly tempted to stop at 500.

"No writer ought to be believed, as to any fact which he had not a personal opportunity of knowing, unless he cites as authority, some known author of credit, who had such an opportunity, and unless the *reader knows that he had it.*"

If these two propositions are believed, the inference is this,—we *ought not to believe any historical fact anterior to* 600 *before Christ.* Why did not the Reviewer deny not only that such a man as Homer lived previous to this period, but also the existence of the works attributed to him, the nations and scenes which they describe, the Greeks, Trojans and their celebrated war? for we have no proof of *their* existence previous to this period, except the testimony of history anterior to 600 before Christ. This certainly would have been the shorter way to annihilate the immortal Homer!—But more of these positions.

"Contradictions and uncertainties as to any fact among those who relate and contest it, and which cannot be reconciled, furnish reason enough to say, there is not sufficient evidence of this fact to render it worthy of belief.

"There is no evidence of any long or continued

composition, by any author, of any kind, prior to 440, when Herod read his history at the Olympic Games.

"Of modern history there is not accurate, reasonable and really authentic evidence for one hundredth part of it."

It is not our design to reply to these statements in an elaborate argument; but as to the first, we say unhesitatingly, it should be received with great caution, and never ought to be assumed as a position. In some cases it may be safe; but should it be applied to those historians who wrote before the Christian era, it would sweep away many very important facts—facts which have been admitted by the most incredulous, not excepting the Reviewer himself. The second we *cannot believe* until we have seen some evidence to confirm it. The idea that Herodotus made the splendid discovery of committing a long series of events to the papyrus or scroll, and neither he or any other historian mention it, is, to say the least, a perfect absurdity. The reader need not be told, that the last, however much it may *savor* of truth, is greatly exaggerated. It carries with it its own comment, and illustration, too, if it has any. But we were not a little amused, when we found that these statements held a rank among those that were dignified with the appellation—"Canons of Criticism." Surely, if the defence of his intrenchment depends upon such 'Canons,' its safety will be owing to the extreme weakness of his antagonist. There are many other positions, interesting to the scholar, laid down in relation to the early history of the Roman, Egyptian and Arabian people, which have only an indirect bearing upon the question, and therefore will be passed over in silence.

Having thus given an outline of the views entertained by some of the learned in regard to the Iliad and Odyssey and their authorship, previous to the publication of Wolf's celebrated *Prolegomena*, also the views of the Reviewer upon it, together with some of his 'Canons of Criticism,' it will be the object of our succeeding numbers to sustain the position there controverted,—*that one man by the name of Homer was the original author of the Iliad and Odyssey.*

The following are the arguments against the position, as stated in the review:

"1. The utter uncertainty of all the traditions concerning Homer: his existence, his age or period, his country, his history.

"2. The state of civilization at the supposed period of Homer's appearing—being either the savage state or that immediately succeeding it.

"3. The improbability in the then state of knowledge and literature, of one man being capable of forming a connected story, so ingeniously and artificially designed, with so many complicated parts as we see in these poems.

"4. The high degree of probability, that among a succession of rhapsodists who sang these songs professionally during several centuries, and while the whole existed unwritten, in the memory of various people in various parts of Greece, during a long period of years, they would be apt to insert and pass off their own compositions as Homer's, detection being nearly impossible.

"5. From the want of connexion of several books in the Iliad with the general story.

"6. From frequent repetitions in sentences and comparisons; which would be well enough when recited to different persons, at different times and places; but not, as parts of one regular and arranged composition.

"7. From the utter impossibility of believing that the Greeks of Homer's time could have continued unchanged from thence until the time of Pisistratus."

Our next will be occupied with a brief examination of the several points laid down in the above extract. CRITIQUE.

Remember Me.

1.

When on life's troubled ocean all lonely I'm borne,
And around me in gloom wildly gathers the storm,
Oh! then dost thou walk o'er the billowy sea,
And 'mid dangers and deaths thou rememberest me.

2.

When o'er heavens dark clouds vivid lightnings are flashing,
And the deep-bursting thunders around me are crashing;
To thee, O my God! I rejoicingly flee,
For alone in that hour thou rememberest me.

3.

When the tempest is over and hope's cheering ray
Guides my wandering bark through life's watery way,
Then, then shall I cease to give praises to thee
Who in perils lone hour kept remembrance of me?

4.

When on earth's gloomy waste I shall linger no more,
And I'm silently wafted to death's welcome shore;
Exultingly then my last sentence shall be,
In heaven, oh! my Savior, remember thou me. E. L. T.

Theatrical Exhibitions.

In every age, since the first exhibitions in Greece, where Thespis gratified the public with dramatic performances in his cart, to the present enlightened period, the stage has numbered among its advocates eminent and honest men. Indeed, the wonder has been why any men of erudition have opposed it, rather than why the most celebrated, and men of the most unexceptionable characters, have been strenuous in its support, and loud in their acclamations of its applause. Believing, as I do, that the legitimate and inevitable effect of theatrical performances is to enervate the mind and undermine the morals of men, I cannot account for the above stated facts, except upon the ground that theatres depend for support upon stronger principles of the human intellect than judgment. Fancy and

curiosity, in the debates which every man of reflection carries on his own mind, are almost universally arrayed in opposition to judgment; and with a singular alertness of manœuvre, come to the attack with unparalleled eagerness; while judgment, like a tardy general, lazily musters his forces under the banner of indecision. Had the knowledge of good and evil been vested in the humble crab-tree, the unsavory fruit and uninviting aspect of the shrub, had proved, I apprehend, a better insurance against the violation of the divine injunction, than the label of mortality on that tree which "was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired," though it contained a denunciation of woe unutterable: So far do curiosity and inclination outstrip reason and judgment.

The advocates of the stage ever insist on the good it *may* do; yet never on the benefit it *has* produced. We are sometimes told that it is capable of refining and well nigh renovating the human character; yet, unfortunately, this wonderful energy, like the long sought and loud celebrated 'Elixir Vitæ,' has 'not been developed during a lapse of centuries; so that theatres seem to resemble those beautiful spots often occurring in the midst of vast deserts, which, though all acknowledge their fertility, are never known to nourish any thing except savage beasts and serpents of venom. I repeat it—This grand inherent excellence has never yet exhibited itself in the effects which theatrical performances have produced on society, in any age or nation. One of two things must be true, therefore,—either that the influence of theatres is actually what their effect, on society, have proved it; or that owing to extraneous circumstances the genius of the stage has not yet been able to display its salutary energies; but like an electric machine in a variable atmosphere, some times produces no effect at all, and at others, nearly destroys the individual on which it exerts its powers.

That theatrical performances have afforded amusement, is true; that this amusement has ever been purchased by an impaired moral sensibility—by an intellect enfeebled—by an immense sacrifice of individual happiness, and often by public calamity, the writer of this article holds himself ready to prove.

There is one fact in connexion with this subject I have never seen stated, which, admitting the theatre to be a moral and literary institution, I should like to have accounted for. In all questions which involve morality or science, the devotees of licentiousness and the thralls of ignorance, are ever found in the ranks of the opposition. But not so here. When we examine, we find in the ranks of this would-be spotless institution, the scape-goat, who, from his conduct, seems to bear on his head the sins of seven generations; and the brainless hag whose profoundest erudition is exemplified in the arrangement of the paints on her time-soiled visage. Be it remembered, I state not that these are the only friends of the stage; already have I acknowledged that wise men and good men have been found among its supporters. I mention it rather as a remarkable fact, if, as one says—

"These polished arts have humaniz'd mankind,—
"Soften'd the rude and calm'd the boisterous mind;"

that the defenders of theatrical exhibitions should meet an acquiescence so hearty from the *rude* and *boisterous* of every age and every clime. A precedent cannot be adduced. G.

Autumn: the Coquet's Mirror.

The weary winds in ever restless round,
And fitful gusts, drive mists along the sky;
With lonely sounds the sober woods resound,
And summer flowers are desolate and dry.

For Autumn, oft by poetasters sung,
Uncouth of aspect visits us again;
And tempts my muse, tho' unfledg'd still and young
To paint her stalking o'er the russet plain.

In stature tall, with weather-beaten face,
She emulates the maid of forty-five;
With blushing fruits and artificial grace,
She stains her sallow cheeks to seem alive.

Her robe was woven in an antique loom,
Of frost-bit weeds and gorse and oziers lithe;
Arranged as warp in Nature's spinning room;
The dead-grass woof Time gather'd with his scythe.

Her temper varies with the changing breeze;
Now sober, sullen, savage, shrewd, and sour;
And now, as her whole being were to please,
She smiles, and e'en her clouds forget to lower.

'Tis said the maiden Autumn once did love
Two truant wights who ill repaid her care;
For she, to be coquetish, gentle dove,
Would not have one and could not have the pair.

So she must please them both; and when she turn'd
Her face toward *Summer* she would smirk and smile,
And then, their tender visit once adjourned,
With *Winter* she was wont to storm awhile.

Too long, alas! she practised this poor game,
Till youth had fled and both her suitors flew;
Yet apes her quondam self and acts the same,
Now storms and thunders and now smiles anew.

GELID.

Nature.

"Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye,
"Or music to his ear."

Objects do not always attract attention or excite admiration in proportion to their lucrative value. Such as neither gratify the taste nor administer to our convenience, are frequently productive of superior pleasure. The truant school boy as he winds his course along

the rivulet, eager to seize the "finny prize," is often led to stop and examine the curious pebbles of the stream. Not unlike him is the man of science, who counts it worthy of his rank to occupy whole years in search of rarities among the mineral substances of earth, who traverses mountains, enters their caverns, compares, analyses and classifies the curiosities, which the science of geology presents. Even in the lowest department of nature's realm, beauties are spread out before him in countless profusion.

Stupid must be the intellect and pitiable the taste of that person, who is a stranger to the pleasures of rural scenery. No season is left without its beauties. But upon Spring: when nature awakes from her wintry slumberings, decks herself with attire, which art strives in vain to imitate, and invites the scrutiny of the curious, has she most bountifully lavished her gifts. She invites us at this season to some lofty eminence, where the surrounding country is spread out before us. Now the forests robed in new verdure, wave to the passing breezes. While in one direction are blended all kinds in delightful variety, in another the tall pines have gained possession of the soil. At a distance the spruce and hemlock raise their lofty heads, as if, like some of human form, to gain that notice by external show, which they cannot claim by intrinsic worth. Still further on are seen broad clusters of the saccharine maple, indicating a rich soil. On a proud eminence, see the venerable oak, which, like the truly virtuous man, stands firm against the tempest's fiercest blast. The open country, the seat of competency and contentment is spread out before us, with its endless variety of hills, verdant vales and cultured plains.

Yonder, behold the noble river just liberated from its icy fetters. Downward we gaze, and upon its broad bosom, the swift sails whiten in the breeze. Upon its banks, where but a few years since, nature slept unmolested, and nought was heard save the yell of the savage or the howl of the wolf, now villages are rising, and while unnumbered beauties deck the scenery, the spires of their solemn temples glistening in the sun, and pointing to a still fairer clime, awaken within the bosom emotions of intense delight.

> But list to the music that breaks on the ear,
> As it steals from the thicket and wide spreading trees;
> The time of the singing of birds is now near,
> And the voice of the turtle is heard in the breeze.

Let us draw near and listen to their varied melodies, and gaze upon the songsters of the grove. On every side their tuneful notes vibrate, and we find ourselves surrounded with enchanting minstrelsy. A neighboring cataract supplies the choir with bass, while the roar of the distant winds across the mountain height, performs an instrumental part and thus completes this choral symphony. The plaintive lute, the dulcet piano, and the shrill clarion are delightful. The music of the human voice is often most pleasant to the ear. And when instrumental and vocal strains conspire to entertain us with their united charms, our sorrows and our cares are quite forgotten. But they are excelled by the music of the groves, the waters and the winds. These form the grand oratorio of nature. PIERRE.

The Reveller's Song.

> Away, away, away with sorrow,
> Let joyous hope beguile—
> For in our wine-cups we can see,
> A bright and joyous smile.
>
> Awake, awake the note of pleasure,
> In soft strains merrily—
> And let the voice in sky of azure,
> Resound the revelry.
>
> Let music's note be loudly sounding,
> And joy light each bright eye—
> While every heart is gaily bounding,
> And sweet our moments fly.
>
> Let not a cloud of hateful sadness,
> Be brooding o'er the mind,
> But let us scatter all in gladness,
> That leaves no pang behind.
>
> Let not our joys be freely blighted,
> Or hope be known to fly—
> Or hearts to-day so high delighted,
> To-morrow heave a sigh.
>
> Come! let us seize the fleeting pleasures,
> And let not one pass by;
> For if we lose these glorious treasures,
> In agony we die. M.

Gallery: Character, No. X.

"The noblest study of mankind is man."

The pen of genius has often delineated characters, in which the extremes of virtue and vice, alternately exert a controlling influence. In what light these productions are regarded by the public in general, I am utterly unqualified to state, but in my opinion, their tendency is highly pernicious, and most destructively so, to that portion of community, who permit their fancy to sway their judgment. Let a mind naturally enthusiastic, and unaccustomed to investigate the source of its own emotions, view the picture which Byron has drawn of the Corsair, and it will not be unlikely to admire, at least, if not to emulate. I have been led to make these remarks, by reflecting on the character and fate

of one, who has long since gone to the last home of man.

His story may be comprised in a few words, and it will completely develope his character, without any further illustration. With all that nature could give him to qualify him for greatness, he became a degraded outcast from society, and fell, before the meridian of life, a victim to those erroneous views of the human character, and those false conceptions of virtue and vice, which are exhibited on every page of popular romances.—His disposition was benevolent and unsuspecting—his feelings highly susceptible, and to a more than ordinary share of talents, he added no inconsiderable degree of vanity and confidence in himself.

While he viewed the world at a distance, his fancy had thrown its own bright coloring around every object, and when he entered upon the scene of action, it was with the delusive expectation of finding it that ideal world, which he had pictured in his own imagination. Disappointments of course assailed him, but he was wholly unprepared to encounter them; the dreams of fancy were soon dissipated by sober reality, but his mind, rendered morbid by its previous training, was altogether unable to bear the change. From one extreme he naturally passed to the other. He now looked upon mankind as beasts of prey, each endeavoring to destroy the rest, and fatten on their spoils. He detested and abjured the whole race.—His enemies scorned, his friends pitied him, and forsaken by them all, he died miserably, cursing the deceitfulness of the world with his latest breath.

D.

Youthful Pleasures.

THERE's a sound of mirth in that festive hall,
With the voice of the young and fair:
For the light of heart, and the free of soul,
With earth's loveliest are there.

The joyous peals of laughter loud,
Are borne on evening air;
And the voice of song, from the blithesome crowd,
Dispels each thought of care.

The dance goes on and cups o'erflow,
And the pulse of joy beats high:
On the cheeks of the fair, soft blushes glow,
And gladness beams from her eye.

And bright eyes meet, as around the dance
They merrily pass along,
And the tale of love, in the secret glance,
Is blent with the voice of song.

But the laugh is hush'd, and silent now
Is music's thrilling tone;
And paleness sits on each maiden's brow,
And the light from each eye hath flown.

A gentle moan, and a secret fear
Thrill'd thro' that troubled throng,
For the spirit of her, the loveliest there,
Had fled from the dance and song.

ERIN.

The following truly astonishing incidents, (originally written for the Vermont American,) we think outdo the miscreant Dorrill and his followers, whose fame is perpetuated in the Vermont Gazetteer. They occurred in Middletown, Rutland Co. Vt. And if of no other advantage, serve to show how far the mind of man may be degraded by ignorance, selfishness and superstition.

EDITORS.

The Rodsmen.

INSTANCES of great delusion or fanaticism have been rare thro' our country, and particularly so, among the intelligent yeomanry of New-England. Since the days of the Salem witchcraft, and the times of the Connecticut Blue Laws, probably nothing has occurred in our states exhibiting such complete fanaticism, and so utter a destitution of propriety and common sense, as the origin and operations of a *Fraternity of Rodsmen*, (formerly existing in this state,) whose character it is now our purpose briefly to sketch.

About the year 1800, one or two families in Rutland county, who had been considered respectable citizens, and who were, at the time, members of a Christian church, pretended to have been informed by the Almighty, that they were descendants of the ancient Jews, and were, with their connexions, to be put in possession of the land for many miles around; the way for which was to be providentially prepared, by the destruction of their fellow-townsmen.—They claimed, also, inspired power, with which to cure all sorts of disease—intuitive knowledge of lost or stolen goods, and ability to discover the hidden treasures of the earth, as well as the more convenient talent of transmuting ordinary substances into the precious metals.—Within a year, numbers were added to this band of fanatics; and finally, most of the connexions of its originators were drawn in,—embracing parts of some fifteen families, and numbering nearly forty persons. The instrument of their miraculous powers, was a cleft stick, or *rod*, something of the form of an inverted Y; and when this talisman was firmly grasped in either hand, by its two points, it was believed to indicate the proper course to be pursued, or point out some substances of medicinal utility, or fix the locality of some valuable mine;—which ever of these the agent was pleased to wish. In pursuing the directions of this monitor, the most ludicrous, and occasionally very calamitous, results followed. Ill-shaped and craggy stones, the offals of animals, decayed wood, and even the most offensive ordure, were gathered up as possessing great virtues; and in one instance, at least, these last articles were administered to a sick person, until the credulous patient was relieved from her disgusting boluses by the hand of death.

Before the adoption of any project among the fraternity, a *nod of assent* was required from the *rods* of the whole, which was usually not wanting, provided that of the leader, (or *Mugwump*, as he was technically called,) appeared favorable. In executing plans approved by "the sublime direction of the rod," excavations were made in the mountains, some to a great depth;—the frame of a large building was put up, (which is now in use as a barn;) and numbers of horses were killed for their bones.—From the bowels of the mountain valuable ore was to be taken; the building was to be erected into a furnace for smelting and refining it; and the horses' bones were to be converted into *crucibles!*

The operations of this band of mystics attracted but little notice, till the latter part of the following year; when their movements indicated something more serious, and fears were entertained that some high-handed measure would be attempted, as a winding up scene to their career of folly and infatuation. Their claims to being descendants of the ancient Jews, and lawful inheritors of the whole country, they declared were soon to be established by the hand of Omnipotence. An earthquake was prophecied to happen during the night of the 14th Jan. 1802; at which time the *Destroying Angel* was to move forward and smite all but the chosen. The scene of carnage which was to ensue had been much dwelt upon; and the ninth and eleventh chapters of the book of Ezekiel, (frequently made the subject of discourses at their meetings,) were declared to have special reference to the coming catastrophe.

As the 14th of January approached, excitement increased throughout the town, and the militia were required to be in order for service at a moment's warning.—The military stores belonging to the town, were removed from the house of the *Mugwump*, (which had been their depository,) and the means of producing an *earthquake*, it is believed, were thus removed.

At sunset, of the ominous 14th, the Rodsmen repaired to their leader's house, after nailing upon their door-posts a paper, on which was written—"*Christ our Passover was Sacrificed for us.*" This was to preserve the habitations of the Faithful from the destruction speedily to be visited upon those of their neighbors. Solemn farewells were exchanged with their friends, and many affecting interviews were held by the Rodsmen with their own children, who were not allowed by the stern decree of the *rod* to follow their parents, and of whom these infatuates pretended to believe they were taking their final leave. At 9 o'clock the military were under arms, and a sergeant's guard was posted on each of the four streets diverging from the village. In a short time, six Rodsmen, fantastically dressed, and equipped according to the direction they supposed given them,—(Ezekiel ix. 2,) were observed rapidly approaching. After being hailed by the guard, they were fired upon, when they turned and fled. About midnight, the same men approached the village in another direction—were again hailed, fired upon, and dispersed. Thus ended this strange drama.

Immediately after this exhibition, which had created much consternation, the indignation of the whole people burst upon these shameless impostors. The leaders of the fraternity, therefore, feeling themselves contemptible by the failure of their earthquake; seeing the "slow moving finger of scorn" pointed towards them from all their neighbors; and fearing, moreover, that the heavy hand of the law would fall on them for their misdeeds;—disposed of their property and removed into the County of St. Lawrence, New-York; where it is said something of their former delusion stuck by them. They are now mostly dead.

College Exhibitions.

The annual Exhibition of the Junior Class of Middlebury College, was attended in the Chapel, last Tuesday evening. The order of exercises was as follow:

Latin Oration....*De magnanimitate Romana*, D. Ladd.
Oration.....*Enfranchisement of Europe*, R. S. Lockwood.
Oration.....*Mutability*, J. Bates, Jun.
Oration.....*Future Prospects of France*, B. W. Reynolds.
Oration....*Character of the Puritans*, E. H. Jenny.
Greek Oration....*Ancient Greece*, J. Mattocks, Jr.
Oration....*Chivalry*, W. D. Cooke.
Oration....*Heroic Influences*, W. Scales.
Forensic Discussion....*Have the results of the Revolution in South America compensated for the sacrifice of blood and treasure*, H. Seymour, Jun., and J. Meacham.
Poem.....*Destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70*, J. Blanchard, Jr.
Dialogue.....*American Education*, H. B. M'Cluer.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Young,	J. Meacham.
Mr. Bailey,	H. Seymour, Jun.
Mr. Morse,	H. B. McCluer.
A Student,	B. W. Reynolds.

Oration...*Influence of Solitary Thought*, A. H. Post
Deliberative Discussion....*Universal Suffrage*, S. L. Matthews, R. F. Lawrence, H. H. Stewart.

The annual Exhibition of the Senior Class was attended in the College Chapel last evening. Exercises as follow:

Latin Oration.....*De Hortensii Eloquentia*, N. O. PRESTON.
Oration.....*Mahometanism*, G. C. HYDE.
Oration.....*National Glory*, B. W. SMITH.
Oration.....*Earthquakes*, E. M. BARBOUR.
Poem.....*Changes of Man*, D. H. DEACON.
Oration.....*Music*, N. BARBOUR.
Oration.....*Solitude*, J. M. HOOKER.
Oration.....*"The Apostate,"* S. A. KIRBY.
Oration.....*System*, E. JONES, Jun.
Dialogue.....*Alehouse Politicians*, D. H. DEACON.

CHARACTERS.

Hon. Stentor Long Hornblower, B. W. Smith.
Peter Pendulum, Esq. *Lawyer*, N. O. Preston.
Jonathan Bush, *Farmer*, H. Curtis.
Pheelim Birch, *School-Master*, G. C. Hyde.
Tom Salt, *Sailor*, D. H. Deacon.

Oration.....*Credulity*, B. FANCHER.
Deliberative Discussion.....D. S. SHELDON, A. SMITH, H. CURTIS.

Items of News.

We noticed briefly in our last No. an Oration of Mr. Grimke, in which a study of the Bible and of Sacred Literature were urged with much feeling and power. We refer to this subject again; and with the remark that it has been wonderfully and reprehensibly neglected by our literary men and by the Church.——The late Rev. Mr. Christmas, of New-York, gave lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, just before his death; in one of which he took occasion to condemn the practice of Colleges in forming and disciplining the minds of students by a study of the history, morality, and polytheism of the Pagans. Mr C. says: "in the progress of Classical reading, the youthful student becomes familiar with absurd theology, with false principles in morals, and with gross profaneness and disgusting obscenity. Yet all is dignified by antiquity and rendered imposing by the charms of taste and the force of genius."—"After the youthful mind during its most susceptible period, has become thus fully imbued with the spirit of heathenism, need we be surprised that the pure, unostentatious and self-denying temper of Christianity should be received with disgust?"—"This is a sin for which Christian parents have to answer—a sin in the guilt of which our Colleges are yet deep; and while it continues we need not wonder that so many promising young men are ruined while at the seat of instruction. Is it asked—if a veto be put upon the Greek and Roman Classics, what shall we do? Do?—do without them. Is taste to be bought with the blood of souls? Must we be indebted to the Pagans for the cultivation of a refined taste? Is there 'no "smith found throughout all the land of Israel; "and must the Israelites go down to the Philis-"tines, to sharpen every man his share, and his "coulter, and his axe, and his mattock?'"

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Mr. Josiah Holbrook of Boston, Editor of the "Scientific Tracts," and a gentleman who has bestowed much valuable labor in advancing Common School instruction,—has been induced to visit this state for the purpose of attending Conventions of Teachers, in different towns. Lectures will be given on various subjects; improved methods of teaching will be exhibited; opportunities will be afforded for the formation of Associations of Teachers or County Lyceums; &c. We cannot but think that these meetings will result in much good; and it is hoped that School Teachers and School Committees, will show a right spirit in the matter.—Mr. Holbrook proposes to be

At Newfane,	Nov. 29	At Burlington,	Dec. 14
" Woodstock,	Dec. 1	" St. Albans,	" 15
" Chelsea,	" 3	" Middlebury,	" 18
" Danville,	" 8	" Rutland,	" 21
" Montpelier,	" 10	" Rennington,	" 24
" Williston,	" 13		

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The Western Reserve Synod, "in view of the doubtful authority, whether scriptural or rational, by which the honorary title of D. D. is conferred on some Christian ministers, in distinction from others; and with the conviction that the conferring of such titles, as honorary distinctions, is incompatible with the acknowledged parity of standing Christian ministers;"—have resolved, that they "will no longer recognize such titles as belonging to ministers of the Gospel."

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The new and valuable four story edifice belonging to Athens College, Georgia, was destroyed by fire on the 23d ult.—with an extensive Library and a number of Mathematical and Astronomical Instruments. Loss estimated at from 25 to $30,000.

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"Middlebury Female Seminary." A Catalogue of this flourishing institution, just issued, gives 140 pupils for the past year, and 71 the last quarter. The Winter Term begins next Monday.

MARRIED,

In Castleton, John Mason Esq. to Mrs. Sally Noble. In Burlington, Mr. Roswell Silly, to Miss Sophronia A. Spaulding. In Hinesburgh, Mr. Henman Kenyon to Miss Eliza Kellogg. In Tunbridge, Mr. Josiah Smith to Mrs. Chloe Cowdrey. In Swanton, Mr. Joseph W. Blake to Miss Minerva Green. In St. Albans, Mr. Charles A. Pease to Miss Ruth Griffin. In Colchester, Capt. John Johnson to Mrs. Abigail Porter. In Clarendon Mr. Jonathan Ridland to Miss Rosetta Calvin.—Mr. Jonathan Round to Miss Sally Congdon.—Also, Mr. Nahum G. Clark to Miss Ann Eliza Round.

DIED,

In Whitehall, Dr. Amasa Allen, aged 49. In Danville, Capt. Joseph Whitcher, aged 67. In Woodstock, Mrs. Maria Meacham, 81, In Decatur, Illinois, Silas Packard, Esq. of Royalton, Vt. In Tecumseh, Mich. Ter. Mr. Albert B. Russ, aged 22, late from Hartford, Vt. In Shoreham, Mr. Manoah Cooper, aged 32. In Bennington, Mr. Jesse Field, aged 81. In Pomfret, Miss Roxinda Gibbs. In Philadelphia, Mrs. Ann Brown, wife of James Brown, Esq. late Late Minister to France. In Cambridge, Vt. Elizabeth Griswold, wife of Benjamin Griswold, aged 70. In Montgomery, Dea. Sylvester Kinney, aged 64. In Orange, (of the lock-jaw,) Mr. Wm. Curtis, aged 74. In Whiting, Eveline L. daughter of Nahum and Lydia Bryant, aged 7 years. In Williston, Mr Nathaniel Harris, aged 52 years. At the Des Moines Rapids, on board the Steamboat Triton, (from Galena Illinois, to St. Louis,) Mr Warren Spear, aged 32. Mr. Spear, was a native of Reading Vt. At Shawneetown, Illinois, Hon. John McLean, one of the Senators in Congress of that State. In Middlebury, Mr Grove A. Goodrich, aged 20 years.